Whitemud Watershed Conservation District

Management Plan

Manitoba
Rural Development
Conservation
Districts Authority

90-06249/1

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WHITEMUD WATERSHED CONSERVATION DISTRICT NO. 1

WHITEMUD WATERSHED CONSERVATION DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 130
NEEPAWA, MANITOBA
R0J 1H0
(204) 476-5019

November 20, 1989

Honourable Jack Penner
Minister of Rural Development
Room 330, Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Mr. Penner:

On behalf of the Whitemud Watershed Conservation District Board, it is my pleasure to present to you the Whitemud Conservation Management Plan. This Plan outlines our policy, program and budget priorities for the next five years and describes our long-term direction for conserving the Watershed's resources.

During the preparation of our Plan, the Board has been gratified by the interest and valuable input received from local residents, municipal councils, and provincial officials.

By resolution dated November 16, 1989, the Conservation District Board formally approved the Whitemud Watershed Conservation District Management Plan. The Board now requests your approval of our Plan.

With your endorsement and the Province's increasing support, the Board looks forward to implementing its Plan over the next five years.

Sincerely,

Kurt W. Schmidt

K. Schmidt, Chairman
Whitemud Watershed Conservation District

Minister of
Rural Development

Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA
R3C 0V8

March 30, 1990

Mr. Kurt Schmidt
Chairman, Whitemud Watershed
Conservation District Board
Box 130
Neepawa, Manitoba
R0J 1H0

Dear Mr. Schmidt:

I have reviewed the Whitemud Watershed Conservation District Management Plan with considerable interest.

The Board is to be congratulated not only for the scope and vision of the plan, but also the open, public participation process which was followed in preparing it. It presents a clear, community vision of where you want to go, and how you will get there.

Your Plan will help to forge a strong, continued partnership with the Province of Manitoba. The wise management of our land and water resources, on a sustainable basis, is clearly in the interests of everyone. Your District will be better equipped to meet the challenge of the next century.

I approve your Management Plan, and offer the assistance of my Department to implement the programs.

Yours truly,

Jack Penner

Whitemud Watershed Conservation District

The District

The Whitemud Watershed is Manitoba's oldest and largest conservation district. Established in 1972, it covers over 2,700 square miles, or nearly 1.8 million acres.

The District comprises all or part of fourteen rural municipalities, one local government district, and Riding Mountain National Park (see map opposite). Crossing the boundaries of these jurisdictions are eight sub-districts that correspond to the Watershed's drainage sub-basins.

The Watershed is composed of a variety of topographic and geological zones (see pp. 22-23). These include the sand hills in the south, the ridge and swail country in the east, a low till plain in the north, and the heavily wooded and steep-sloped Manitoba Escarpment on the west. Significant features, such as the area's extensive agricultural land uses, natural waterways, and major wetlands, are easily seen in the satellite photograph on page 24.

The Board

A ten-person Board establishes conservation policy and program budgets for the Watershed and is responsible for the administration of all District programs and projects.

Nine members are selected from committees representing the sub-districts; one member is appointed by the Provincial Government.

Your District Board and Staff

From L to R: Harold Manns, *SD 38;* Jim Knight, *SD 35;* Minnie Paryniuk, *SD 37;* Glenn Montgomery, *SD 39;* Gail White, *Sec.-Tres.;* Henriette Kleemola, *SD 43;* Kurt Schmidt, *Chairman;* Einar Sigurdson, *SD 42;* Dr. K.I. Johnson, *Govt. Appointee (resigned);* Wayne Hildebrand, *Manager;* Bob Drysdale, *SD 40;* Robert Rodgers, *SD 36.* Absent: Glen Nichol, *Soils Technician.*

Management Plan Purposes

Why Planning?

The Board intends to establish, through an official Management Plan, a long-range strategy and five-year program commitments for conserving our natural and man-made resources.

As the Board sees them, the main purposes of this Plan are:

- To inform the District's residents about the Board's conservation strategy, policies, and future program intentions.
- To obtain advice and support from residents, municipalities, and provincial officials on the Board's conservation objectives and funding priorities.
- To use a five-year program and budget plan as a guide for the Board's specific project decisions.
- To provide a coherent framework for the Board's funding requests from government and non-government sources.
- To implement innovative and practical conservation ideas, policies and practices.

Funding Objectives

As our conservation problems become more urgent and as demands for services increase, it is becoming more difficult to keep our taxes as low as they have been. To respond to this challenge, the Board proposes to implement a number of actions that should:

1. help stabilize the levies paid by local ratepayers, although providing for modest and legitimate increases over time;
2. expand some services while lowering others;
3. institute reasonable and legitimate charges or fees for selected District programs and services;
4. provide greater resources for District-wide programs and projects, financed by improved external and municipal contributions.

Sustainable Development and Provincial Strategy

Conservation and economic progress are closely linked; we in the Whitemud Watershed know that through first-hand experience. And we recognize that if we are unable to pass on our legacy of natural resources to our children, they will not have an economically viable future.

This is the essence of "sustainable development", first declared by the World Commission on Environment and Development, chaired by Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Bruntland. This concept is the basis for the current Canadian initiative to establish a world centre in Manitoba dedicated to the environmentally sound use of the earth's resources.

As part of its commitment to the goal of sustainable development, the Manitoba Government has undertaken development of a provincial Land and Water Strategy. This initiative and the management planning processes undertaken by conservation districts in the province are consistent in their concerns and policy.

In this context, the Whitemud Watershed's Management Plan stands as a detailed, and practical, local/regional application of the unifying concept of sustainable development.

RURAL MUNICIPALITIES IN WHITEMUD WATERSHED

Financial Background

The Expenditure Pattern:1978-89

The accompanying chart illlustrates what it has cost the District to run our programs from 1978 to 1989 (projected). During this 12-year period, the Board will have spent $11.9 million on conservation within the District, rising from $0.67 million in 1978 to about $1.1 million in each of the last five years.

Over the total 12-year period, 55% of all District expenditures have been made to finance water management projects, 20% on crossings, and 15% on soil conservation programs. Other programs were allocated 2% of total expenditures, with administration accounting for 8%.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of the 1988 budget was spent on maintenance and replacement of drains, nine percent (9%) on crossings, and 16% on soil management programs. Remaining expenditures were: two percent (2%) for wildlife programs, two percent (2%) for conservation education programs, and nine percent (9%) to administer the Watershed's operations and programs.

The Revenue Pattern: 1978-89

The accompanying chart illustrates how the District has financed its programs since 1978.

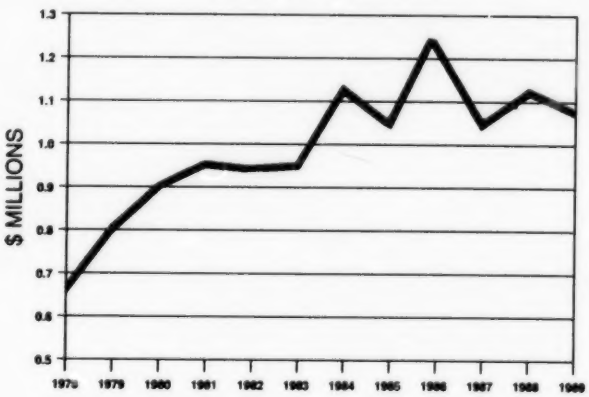
Over the 12-year period, the Provincial Government's grant has accounted for between 73% and 81% of total District revenues. The grant reached its highest level in 1984. For the 1988 fiscal year, the provincial grant made up almost 74% of the Board's budget.

Grants and levies from the member municipalities have accounted for between 17%-21% of annual revenues. Nearly 20% of the Board's budget in 1988 came from municipal sources.

The District also receives revenues from other sources. These are primarily payments from local farmers participating in the Forage Seed Assistance and Shelterbelt programs. Special project funds are also received from such organizations as the Canada-Manitoba Agri-Food Agreement and Ducks Unlimited. All together in 1988, these revenues constituted over 6% of the Board's budget.

EXPENDITURES 1978-1989

Whitemud Watershed



Note: 1986 figures based on a 15 month audit period (Jan 1986-Mar 1987)

Conservation: A Good Financial Deal

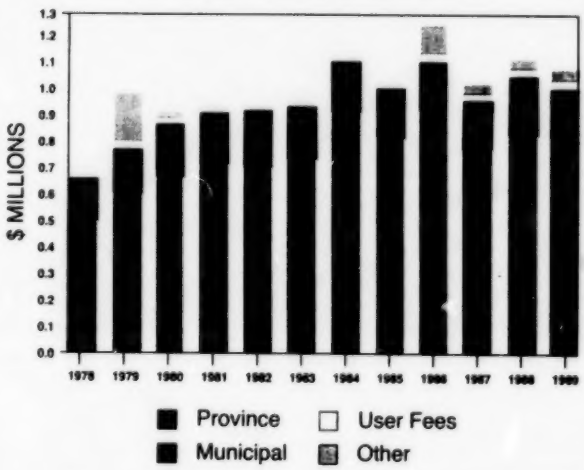
Expansion and change in the Board's future program will require an increasing level of budgetary resources and local commitment. Much of these resources will have to originate and be provided by the participating municipalities and ultimately from area ratepayers.

Nevertheless, it must be recognized by all that conservation in the Whitemud is "a good deal." For every quarter paid by residents of our District, fully three quarters are contributed by all Manitoba taxpayers through our grant from the Provincial Government. In many minds, it is no less than amazing how much is being done here with so little local money.

It should also be noted that, depending on where residents live, local taxpayers are paying anywhere between $1.30 and $8.50 per thousand dollars of assessed land value for the Board's programs. These rates have not risen appreciably over the past ten years.

REVENUES 1978-1989

Whitemud Watershed



Note: 1986 figures based on a 15 month audit period (Jan 1986-Mar 1987)

Water Management

District water management programs serve a number of important purposes:

- to facilitate optimum agricultural productivity;
- to control the magnitude and effects of soil erosion;
- to limit the severity and adverse impacts of flooding;
- to safeguard wetlands;
- to improve and protect fish and wildlife habitat;
- to store water for use during dry periods; and
- to safeguard the quantity and quality of water supplies.

At the same time as the Board's financial resources are becoming more limited, the demands on and costs of its water management programs are increasing.

To better manage this dilemma, the Board is proposing to establish the following commitments, priorities and budget allocations with respect to water management in the District:

- **Largest Budget Allocation to Water-Related Projects:**

Over the five-year period, a total of $3.741 million, or 55.5% of all expenditures, will be spent on water management projects.

- **Maintenance of the Existing Drainage System is the Highest Water Management Priority:**

Most of the water management budget, i.e. $1.41 million, will be spent on maintenance and repair of the over 1000 miles of existing drainage channels (see map, page 21). Normal drain maintenance, e.g. brushing, mowing, sterilization, spraying, and minor repairs, will be emphasized as a means of avoiding deterioration and costly reconstruction.

- **Restoring the Capacity of Drains Now in the Worst Condition:**

Much of the Board's maintenance budget for the next five years will be directed toward bringing up to standard, i.e. reconstructing, those existing drains that have never achieved appropriate standards or that have severely deteriorated.

- **Continuing our Erosion Control Program:**

The Board will continue its program of gully stabilization, grassed runways, shale traps, and gradient controls (drop structures) to minimize erosion and maintain channel integrity.

- **Matching Drainage Standards to Soils:**

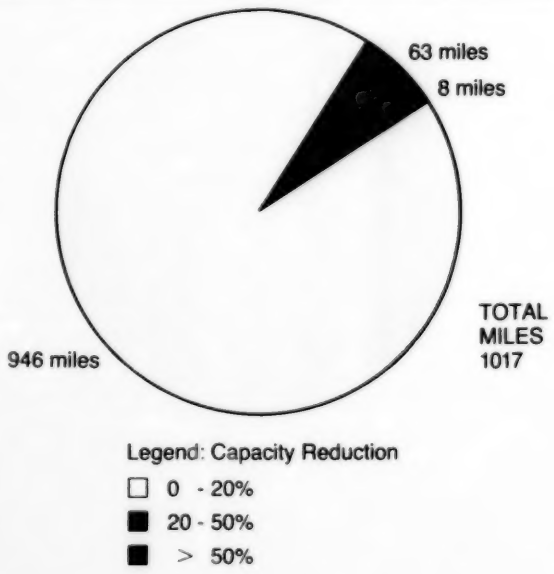
As a general rule, the Board will provide higher standards of drainage to lands with higher agricultural capability, compared to poorer agricultural land.

- **Low Priority on Construction of Additional Agricultural Drains:**

Consistent with its priority on maintenance of the existing system, the Board will generally not approve the construction of additional drains whose sole purpose is removing water from agricultural land. Construction of multi-purpose projects will be considered, however.

In exceptional circumstances and in the event that substantially greater funding becomes available, new conveyance channels may be constructed, and drains may be altered to move water more slowly and/or to reduce and slow down the rate of runoff.

DRAIN CAPACITY STATUS



- **Greater Landowner Responsibility for Drain Maintenance:**

The Board will initiate a concerted publicity and educational campaign to enlist the cooperation of all landowners to maintain the drains that serve their lands. Specifically, to help keep tax levies as low as possible, adjacent and benefitting landowners will be requested to keep the ditches clear of blowdirt, to refrain from cultivating within buffer strips and ditches, to prevent washouts of soil into drains, to minimize seepage of chemicals and animal wastes into the drains, to control weeds and other vegetation, and to adopt improved soil and water conservation practices. Widespread support of this approach throughout the District will enable the Board to maintain and expand its conservation programs without major increases in local taxes.

- **Providing Water Conservation Incentives:**

The Board will investigate the effective use of incentives to promote and encourage water management practices to retain water and prevent erosion.

- **Protecting the Watershed's Water Management System:**

The Board will specifically approach offending landowners in an attempt to have them rectify existing problems and avoid future damage to or deterioration of the drainage system.

If required and where legally feasible, however, the Board will draft by-laws designed to protect the District's drainage investment and to establish penalties for non-compliance. These will be sent to all municipalities in the District for Council consideration and enactment into law.

- **Board to Prepare Water Management Strategy:**

This detailed document, to be approved in 1990, will establish the order and timing of proposed water management projects in the District. In particular, the Strategy will set out the ways in which the Board intends to pursue its goals and priorities regarding drain maintenance, water retention and controlled land drainage.

Two main themes underlie the District's Water Management Strategy:

◊ BACK TO BASICS – EROSION AND SUMMER FLOOD CONTROL: Consistent with the Watershed's original purpose, the Board will only undertake projects that are designed primarily to control erosion and to minimize the flooding effects of summer rainstorms on cropland.

◊ ENVIRONMENTAL AND FINANCIAL SENSITIVITY: The Board will only undertake programs that are environmentally acceptable and economically feasible.

Drain maintenance on Rat Creek

- **Selected Measures to Control Spring Flooding:**

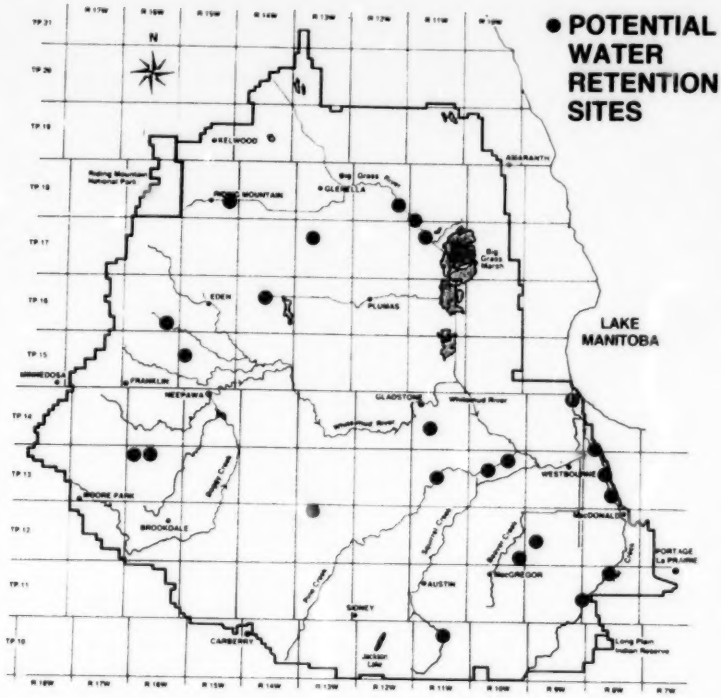
While we recognize and are sensitive to the often serious effects of spring flooding on both agricultural and urban areas in the District, the Board has concluded that there are no economically feasible, structural solutions to this problem. The Board, therefore, will generally not undertake drainage, snow cleanout, ring dyke, or other construction projects whose primary purpose is to attempt to control spring flooding an objective that is economically impossible for the Whitemud Watershed Board to achieve. With the full cooperation of landowners throughout the District, however, the Board proposes to implement a number of non-structural, land use programs that can help to alleviate the worst effects of spring breakup and runoff.

- **High Priority on Water Retention and Controlled Release:**

While recognizing that too much water has caused great problems in some years, the Board believes its greatest current water management challenge, especially after the spring runoff period, is to reduce the speed and magnitude of water flow in the

District. From public response to date, the Board is convinced that its view is shared by the great majority of farmers and residents in the District.

As drought begets drought, it is critically important to retain water in the watershed, especially during dry years. Among the Board's most important proposals for dealing with this problem are:



◊ WATER STORAGE PROJECTS: Over the next five year period, the Board will place highest priority on identifying, securing and developing a network of small-scale, multiple-use water storage sites, ideally on flat land below the escarpment. The Board will continue its small-dams program on private land by cost-sharing projects for purposes of water retention and benefits to fish and wildlife. Between 5 and 10 sites with a minimum size of a quarter section, especially those owned by municiple or other governments, will be sought for retention purposes, either through landowner agreement or direct purchase. Particular preference will be given to sites where water retention will have a positive effect on groundwater recharge. The Board will not construct water retention dams on steep slopes.

◊ POSSIBLE USE OF EXISTING DRAINS TO STORE WATER: The Board will investigate the feasibility of providing controls in selected drainage channels to store water and then gradually release it over several weeks.

◊ ON-FARM WATER RETENTION AND BACKFLOODING: The Board will survey target area landowners and enlist the cooperation of those who are prepared to hold water on their land for periods of two to four weeks during the spring period. During this period, water would be gradually released into the drainage system through manual control of traps. In addition, the Watershed intends to work with local farmers in demonstrating the use and benefits of on-farm potholes, dugouts and reservoirs for water retention, stock watering, irrigation, ground-water recharge and quality, and other agricultural purposes.

• **Emphasis on Multi-purpose Projects:**
The Board will give funding priority to projects that serve many purposes at one time, such as soil conservation; water retention and flood protection; fish spawning and passage; and enhancement of fisheries, waterfowl and wildlife habitat.

• **Restricting Further Land Clearing:**
The manner in which our land is used and the extent to which it has been cleared of trees and vegetation are partially responsible for the District's water management problems.

The Board proposes that the following initiatives now be undertaken:

◊ CHANGES IN ASSESSMENT ON NON-AGRICULTURAL LAND: The Board will request the Province to substantially lower or remove the assessment on non-productive

land, especially woodlots, bush, sloughs, and wetlands.

◇ LEGISLATING EFFECTIVE LAND USE CONTROLS: The Board will cooperate with, and seek agreement of, the Province and all District municipalities to enact and enforce new and effective by-laws prohibiting the clearing of trees and/or other vegetation in fragile, ecologically sensitive, and erosion-prone areas, especially along natural watercourses and on steep-sloped land. The Board is prepared to initiate the preparation of such by-laws.

◇ LONG-TERM EDUCATION: The Board will seek support from the municipalities and the Province to initiate a major public education program to try to prevent any additional breaking or clearing of land in the Watershed.

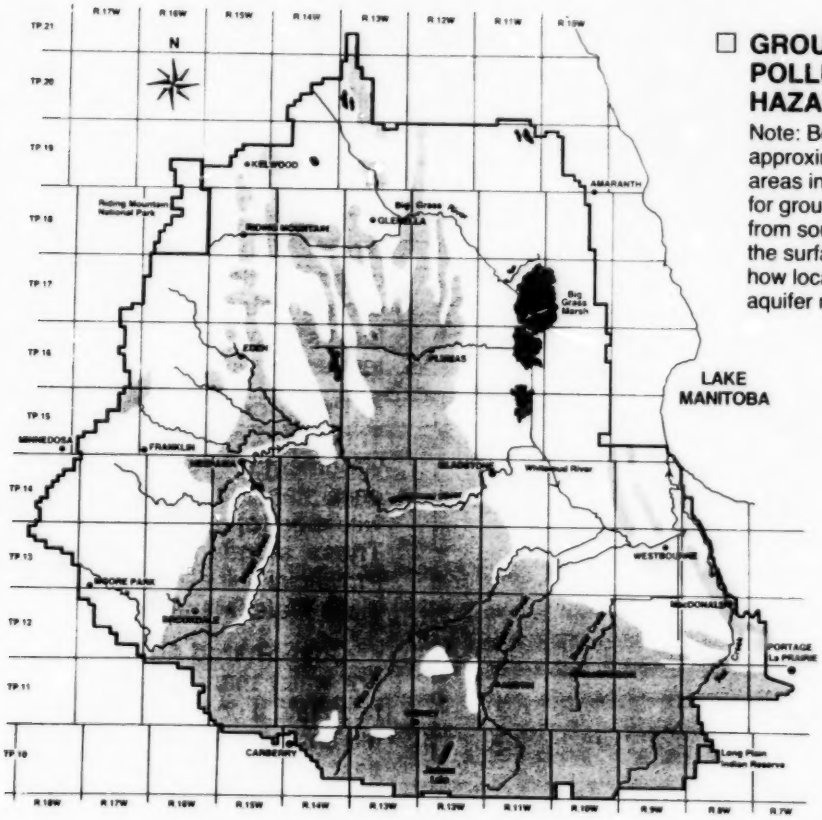
- **"Greening" the District:**

The Board intends to undertake, in cooperation with other government agencies, a major education and incentive program of tree planting and restoration of native plant species, especially along the escarpment, the Whitemud River, and other highly erodable locations.

In exceptional circumstances, the Board will consider purchase of particularly sensitive and significant lands to reinstate tree cover and manage the natural resources thereon.

- **Maintaining and Enhancing Surface and Ground Water Quality:**

The Board intends to lead the way in an attempt to maintain and improve the quality of water in the District, consistent with the Manitoba Surface Water Quality Objectives. The Board will ensure



☐ GROUNDWATER POLLUTION HAZARD AREAS

Note: Boundaries are approximate. Defined areas indicate the potential for groundwater pollution from sources at or near the surface regardless of how local or extensive the aquifer may be.

Grassed Waterway

Shale Trap

Big Grass Marsh

that District programs do not degrade water quality and will seek wherever possible to enhance the quality of surface and ground waters.

The Board will encourage and assist landowners and municipalities to adopt sound water quality conservation practices, including collection of effluent and its possible use as an irrigation spray, creation of marshes to filter sewage lagoon water, restriction on sewage outflow into the drainage system, and disposal of agricultural chemicals at approved hazardous waste treatment facilities.

The Board will also encourage residents to participate in the Department of Environment's water quality monitoring and sampling program.

- **Monitoring the Water Rights Act:**

The Act, passed in 1987, requires landowners to obtain a license for any on-farm works that drain permanent or semi-permanent wetlands. In addition, new on-farm drainage works entering a public drain require the permission of the owner, usually the conservation district or municipality. The Board will report to Provincial authorities on the level of local compliance with the Act and its impacts within the Watershed. The Board will make periodic recommendations as to needed statutory amendments and administrative improvements.

- **Completing the Big Grass Marsh Project:**

The Board intends to proceed with land acquisition and construction of this important multi-purpose project. The project involves water storage and channel outlet improvements to gradually release excess water. Between $8-10 million is required for this purpose, most of which must come from external sources.

- **Environmental Standards:**

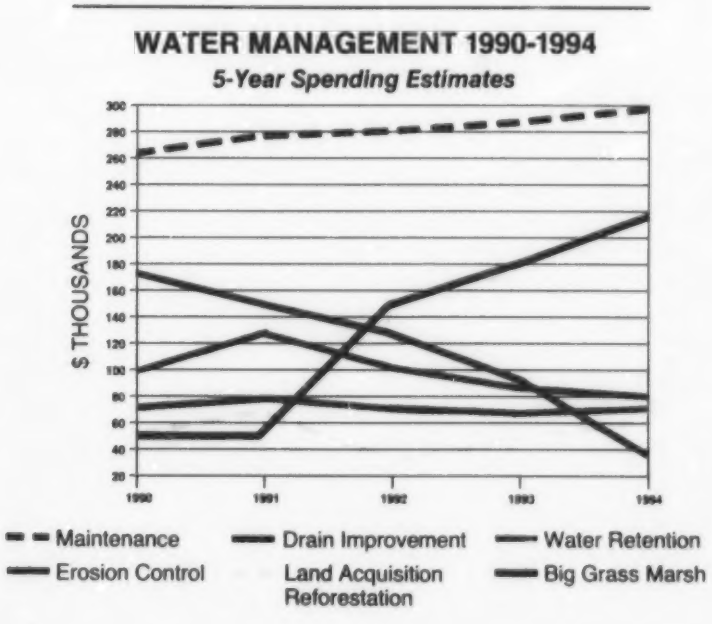
The Board will establish and strictly enforce environmental design, construction and maintenance standards for all District water projects and will monitor and evaluate their performance. These standards, which will meet or exceed Provincial guidelines, will be contained in the District's Water Management Strategy.

- **Cost-Shared Agreements:**

For water management projects, the Board may negotiate a cost-sharing agreement with all affected and/or benefitting landowners and municipalities. Contributions from other parties may be in land, money, labour, or equipment.

5-YEAR SPENDING ESTIMATES: WATER MANAGEMENT 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Maintenance and Repair	265	275	280	290	300	1410
Drainage Improvements	165	150	125	90	35	565
Water Retention Projects	100	125	100	90	80	495
Erosion Control Program	75	80	73	68	71	367
Land Acquisition/Reforestation	50	75	29	45	60	259
Big Grass Marsh Project	50	50	150	180	215	645
Totals	**705**	**755**	**757**	**763**	**761**	**3741**
% of Total Budget for Year	58.0	59.0	56.3	54.1	51.3	55.5



2. Crossings

The District is currently responsible for the maintenance of about 1000 crossings over man-made drainage and water conveyance channels. These are composed of high level bridges, medium level culvert crossings, and low level rock fill or concrete crossings including culverts.

Within ten years, a great many of these crossings will require replacement. Nearly $500,000 (1988$) will be needed annually from 1999 to 2003 to replace structurally unsound crossings. This would consume almost 50% of the District's current yearly budget.

To manage future crossing needs and costs, the Board proposes the following policies:

- **Gradually Decreasing Short-Term Expenditures for Crossings:**

Without increased Provincial funding the Board would have to reduce its expenditures on crossings replacement and maintenance. Measures to do so, particularly over the long term and in collaboration with area municipalities, are outlined below. As of now, however, an estimated $772,000, or 11% of all five-year expenditures, will be spent on crossings, declining to $102,000 in 1991, then increasing to $237,000 by 1994.

- **Special Cost-Shared Agreement with Municipalities for Long-Term Crossings Replacement and Maintenance:**

Given the enormous costs of replacing the crossings infrastructure in future years (beginning in 1995), the Board will seek to negotiate five-year agreements with all District municipalities to share the costs of replacing and maintaining crossings over Watershed drains.

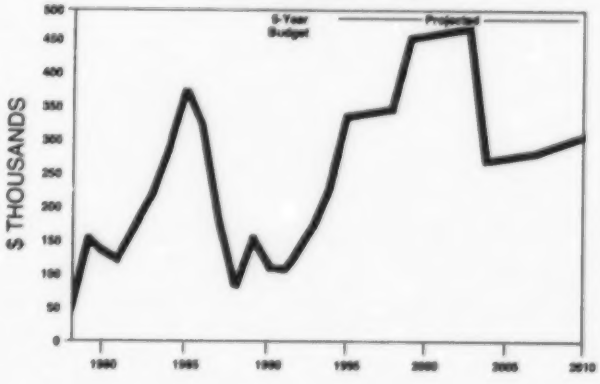
Such agreements can only be realized, however, with additional and sufficient funding provided to the participating parties by the Province.

- **Cooperative Transportation Planning:**

The Board will work with all municipalities in the District and with Manitoba Highways to develop a District-wide road rationalization plan and crossings replacement strategy and schedule. This plan and schedule, which will establish road use priorities and their maintenance standards, should then be fully integrated with the District's drain replacement and maintenance programs, and with other related municipal and provincial works. The Board urges others to follow the lead of the R.M.s of Glenella and Rosedale, which are considering road rationalization schemes.

CROSSING EXPENDITURES 1978-2010

Whitemud Watershed



Low level crossing on Award II drain

- **Establishing Crossings Reserve Fund:**
Over the next five years and as permitted by the Province, the Board will establish an annual budget appropriation and carry over annual surpluses for deposit in a Crossings Reserve Fund to provide for the projected rapid rise in replacement costs in the succeeding five to ten year period.

- **Minimizing Crossing Replacements and Emphasizing Low-Level Crossings:**
As the life of existing crossings expire, the Board will, wherever acceptable and practicable, replace crossings of low priority with cost-efficient, low-level crossings, ensuring that slopes and widths are sufficient for the efficient movement of large agricultural equipment. The Board will also request that municipalities do the same with crossings under their jurisdiction. The Board will assess each individual convenience crossing, in consultation with landowners, to determine whether it should be replaced by a low-level crossing, be closed with provision for an alternate access, or be abandoned.

- **No District Responsibility for Highway-Related Crossings:**
The Board will not assume responsibility for maintaining, reconstructing or replacing crossings over access roads to and from provincial roads and trunk highways.

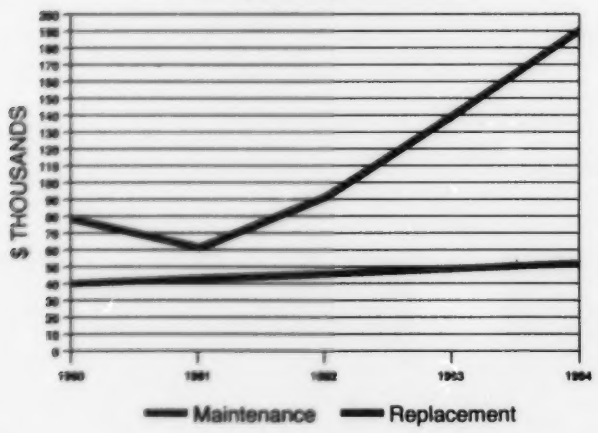
The Board will work closely with Manitoba Highways and Natural Resources to help ensure that highway bridges and culverts are designed and constructed such as to be compatible with connecting District structures and drainage systems.

5-YEAR SPENDING ESTIMATES: CROSSINGS 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Maintenance and Repair	40	42	44	46	49	221
Replacement	76	60	90	137	188	551
Totals	**116**	**102**	**134**	**183**	**237**	**772**
% of Total Budget for Year	9.5	8.0	10.0	13.0	16.0	11.5

CROSSINGS 1990-1994

5-Year Spending Estimates



3. Soil Management

Our soil is our greatest asset. Well over 80% of the Watershed is either under intensive cultivation or in improved forage.

The District's programs are directed at one fundamental objective: to safeguard the amount and quality of our soils for the benefit of future generations through assistance to today's farmers. The Board, therefore, is concerned with protecting all area soils against wind and water erosion.

Consistent with this new emphasis, the Board will implement changes in its major assistance program the forage seed assistance program. These are designed to reduce the current program's production subsidy aspects and to maximize its conservation incentives for improved and expanded soil management practices.

Indeed, this has been the message received from farmers throughout the District, including those who have personally benefitted from the program. The Board is confident, therefore, that its proposals will meet widespread support.

- **Expanding and Revising the Forage Seed Assistance Program:**

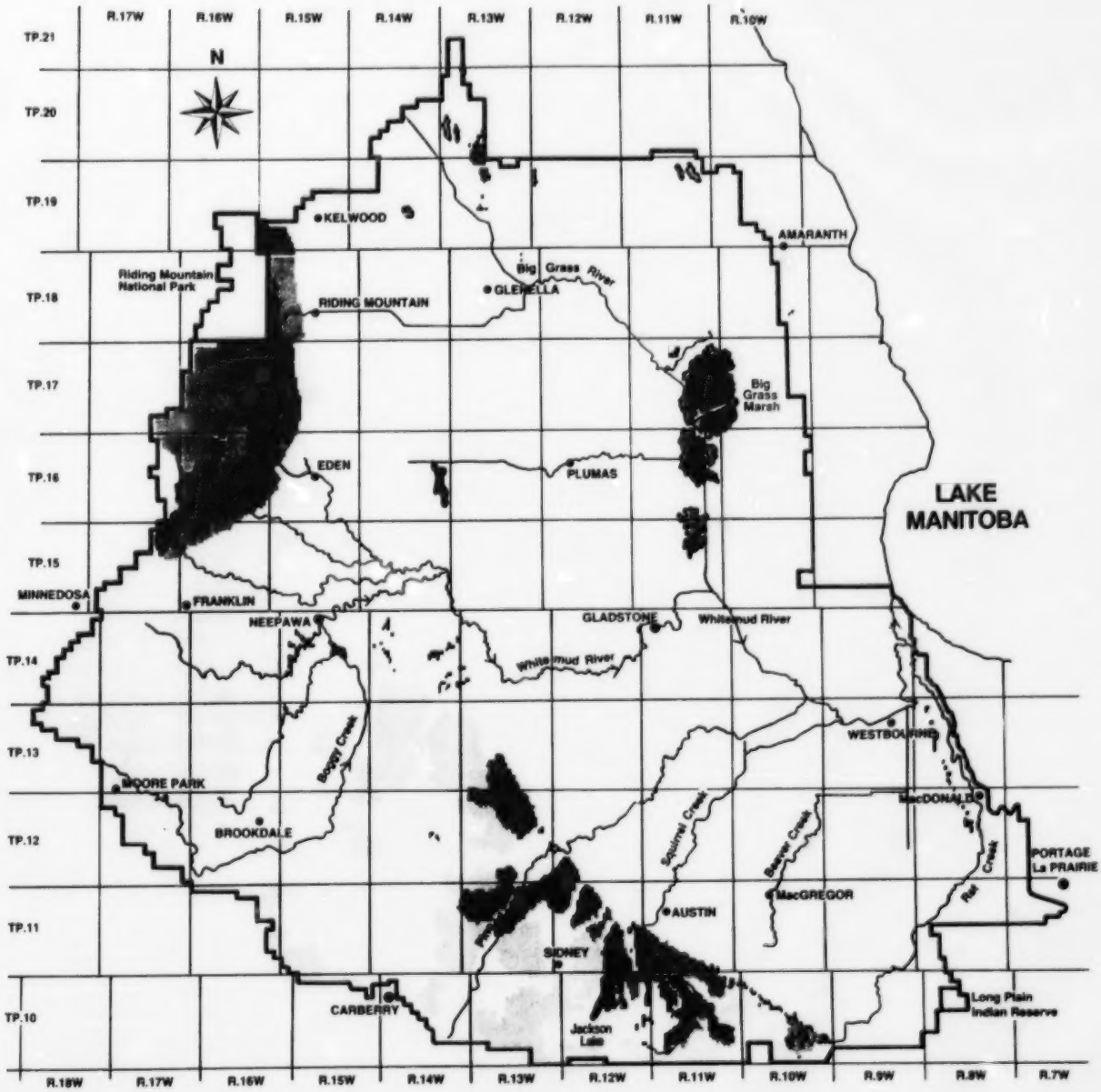
The Board will expand this successful and popular conservation program within revised objectives and program guidelines, including:

1. To be eligible for the program, applicants will be required to describe their erosion problems and justify their eligibility for assistance.
2. To stimulate greater use of the program throughout the District, the amount of erosion-prone land eligible for assistance will be increased to 50 acres per owner, without restrictions as to land classification.
3. Over the three-year period from 1990 to 1992, participating farmers will be required to assume a gradually increasing percentage of the program's cost to a maximum of 80%.
4. Preference will be given to first-time program applicants.
5. Program use will be reduced to one seed purchase every three years, from the current two years.
6. Any program beneficiary who does not maintain forage in fields successfully seeded under the program for at least five years, or who sells or otherwise wastes forage seed, will not be eligible for any future Watershed program assistance.
7. The Board will undertake a thorough review and evaluation of the program in 1992 and again in 1994.

- **Targeting and Revising the Shelterbelt Program:**

The Board will take a more targeted and promotional approach to this very important and successful program by implementing the following revisions:

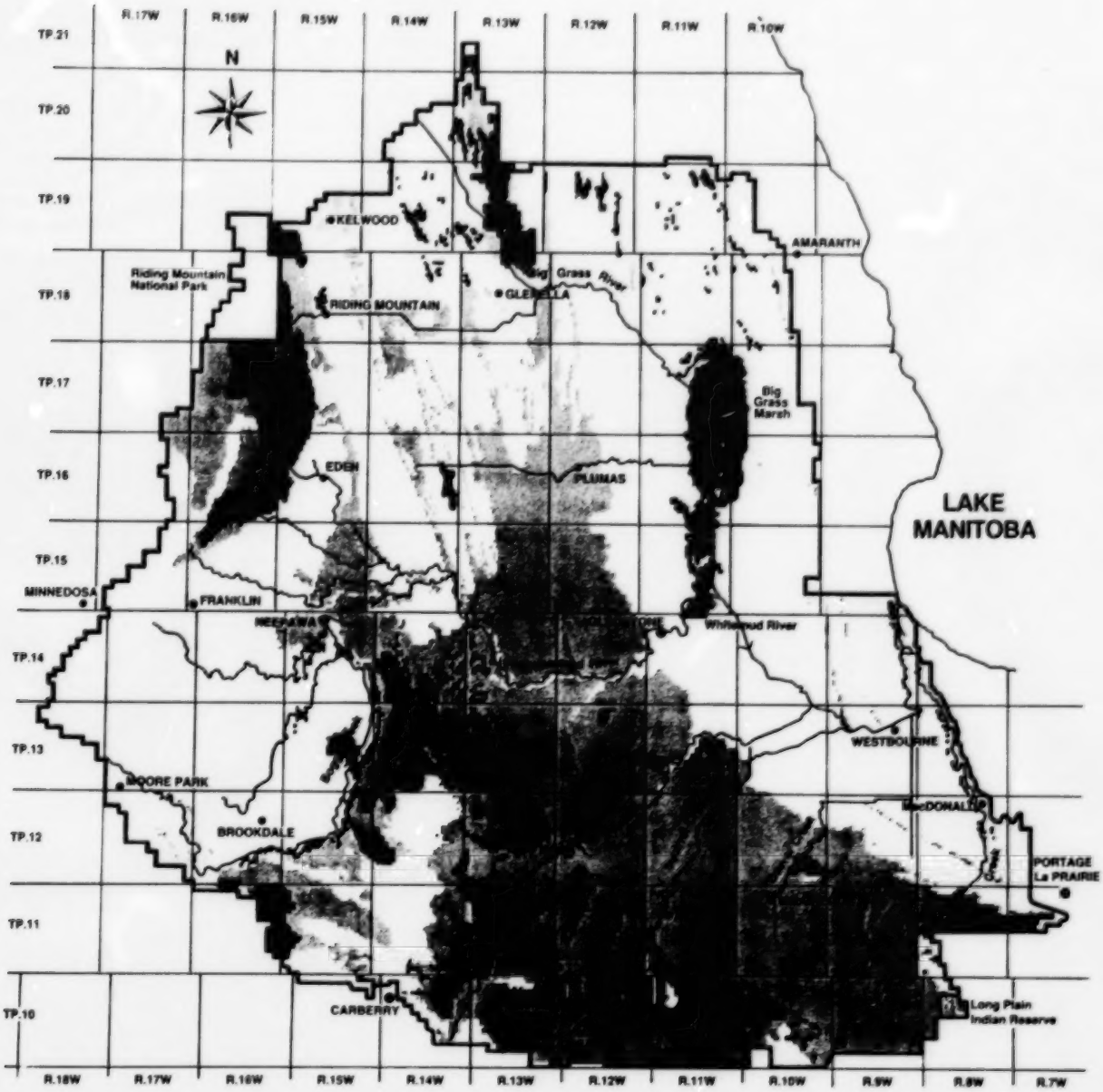
1. The Board will identify and designate townships containing particularly sensitive erosion-prone lands as high priority locations for targeting and promoting shelterbelt assistance.
2. Problem fields within these townships will be identified and landowners personally approached to take advantage of the shelterbelt and related conservation programs.
3. The current landowner share of 20% of a shelterbelt's three-year planting and maintenance cost will be kept at that level for the three-year period from 1990 to 1992.
4. Under a legal agreement with the Watershed, owners will be required to protect and maintain their successfully established shelterbelts; those who do not will be no longer eligible for further District program assistance.
5. The Board will undertake a thorough review and evaluation of the shelterbelt program in 1992 and again in 1994.



WATER EROSION RISK*

- Slight
- Moderate
- High
- Very High

** Risk estimated under bare ground conditions.*



WIND EROSION RISK*

- ☐ Moderate
- ☐ High
- ■ Very High

* *Risk estimated under bare ground conditions.*
Big Grass Marsh area considered "very high" risk under dry, bare soil conditions.

- **Improving and Protecting Shelterbelts:**

Experience with shelterbelts over the past ten years has suggested improved methods of planting and maintenance, such as:

1. The Board will emphasize:
   - planting along property lines (except along road allowances),
   - developing a series of shelterbelts on each quarter-section within an area,
   - wider spacing of trees,
   - use of green ash,
   - optional addition of berry trees, and
   - improved weed control, particularly during the first three years.
2. The Board will require landowners and commercial operators to take special precautions to avoid damage to shelterbelts and other treed areas caused by aerial and ground spraying.

- **Providing Incentives for Demonstrating Better Farming Practices:**

The Board, in collaboration with federal and provincial agriculture departments, will aggressively promote and publicize improved land management practices in the District.

The Board will also assist farmers, especially those in highly visible locations, who are prepared to demonstrate and promote among their neighbours such proven soil conservation methods as minimum tillage, trash management, flax strips, backflood irrigation, field shelterbelts, grassed waterways, and rotational grazing. "Demonstration farmers" will be given preference in accessing other Board programs.

Should there be demonstrated need and sufficient interest from landowners, the Board will purchase and offer for rent to District farmers specialized cultivators, drills and other "conservation equipment".

- **Providing New Assessment Notice Information:**

The Board will request the Provincial and municipal assessment and tax offices to insert in all land assessment and tax notices information regarding the current assessment formulas and mill rates that are applied to bush, sloughs, wetlands, and other marginal or non-productive lands. The Board will encourage landowners to review the tax assessment field sheets on their properties as available at district assessment offices.

Shelterbelt

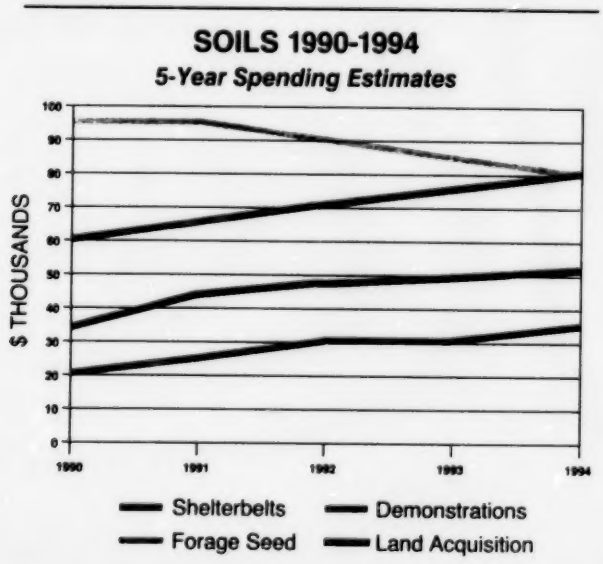
The Board will also request the province and municipalities to include information on the crucial importance and benefits to conservation of preserving and maintaining these lands.

- **Facilitating Land Acquisition:**
The Board will seek special arrangements with government agencies, e.g. Crown Lands Branch, Block Planning Committees, Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, and Farm Credit Corporation Canada, and other financial lending institutions, giving the District greater influence and first rights of refusal over dispositions of land within the Watershed.

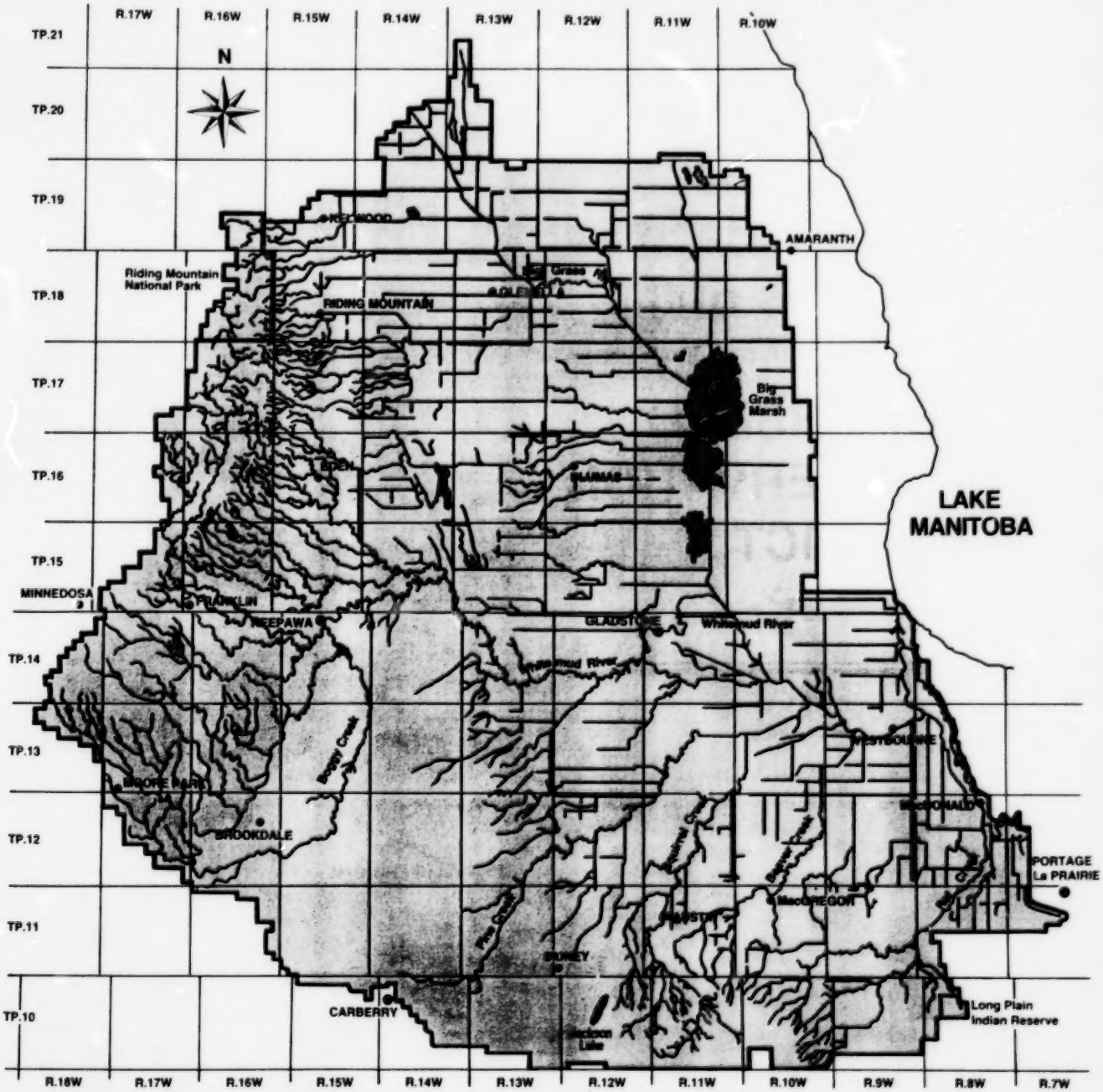
- **Making all Government Programs "Conservation-Positive":**
The Board intends to take active steps, in concert with other Conservation Districts and participating municipalities, to ensure that all federal and provincial tax, agriculture, crown land, municipal, and other publicly-financed programs do not contain incentives or provisions that are "conservation-negative", that is, counter to our soil conservation objectives.

5-YEAR SPENDING ESTIMATES: SOIL MANAGEMENT 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Forage Seed Assistance	95	95	90	85	80	445
Shelterbelt Planting/Maint.	60	65	70	75	80	350
Demonstrations	20	25	30	30	35	140
Land Acquisition/Other	34	44	47	49	51	225
Totals	**209**	**229**	**237**	**239**	**246**	**1160**
% of Total Budget for Year	17.0	18.0	17.6	16.9	16.6	17.2



WATERWAYS IN THE WHITEMUD WATERSHED*



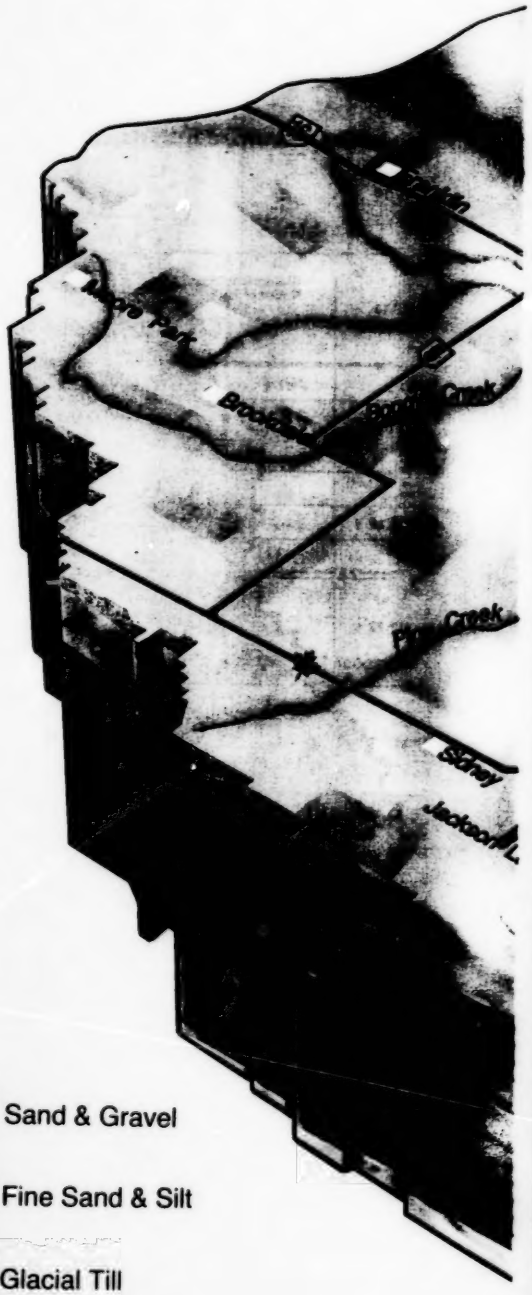
LEGEND

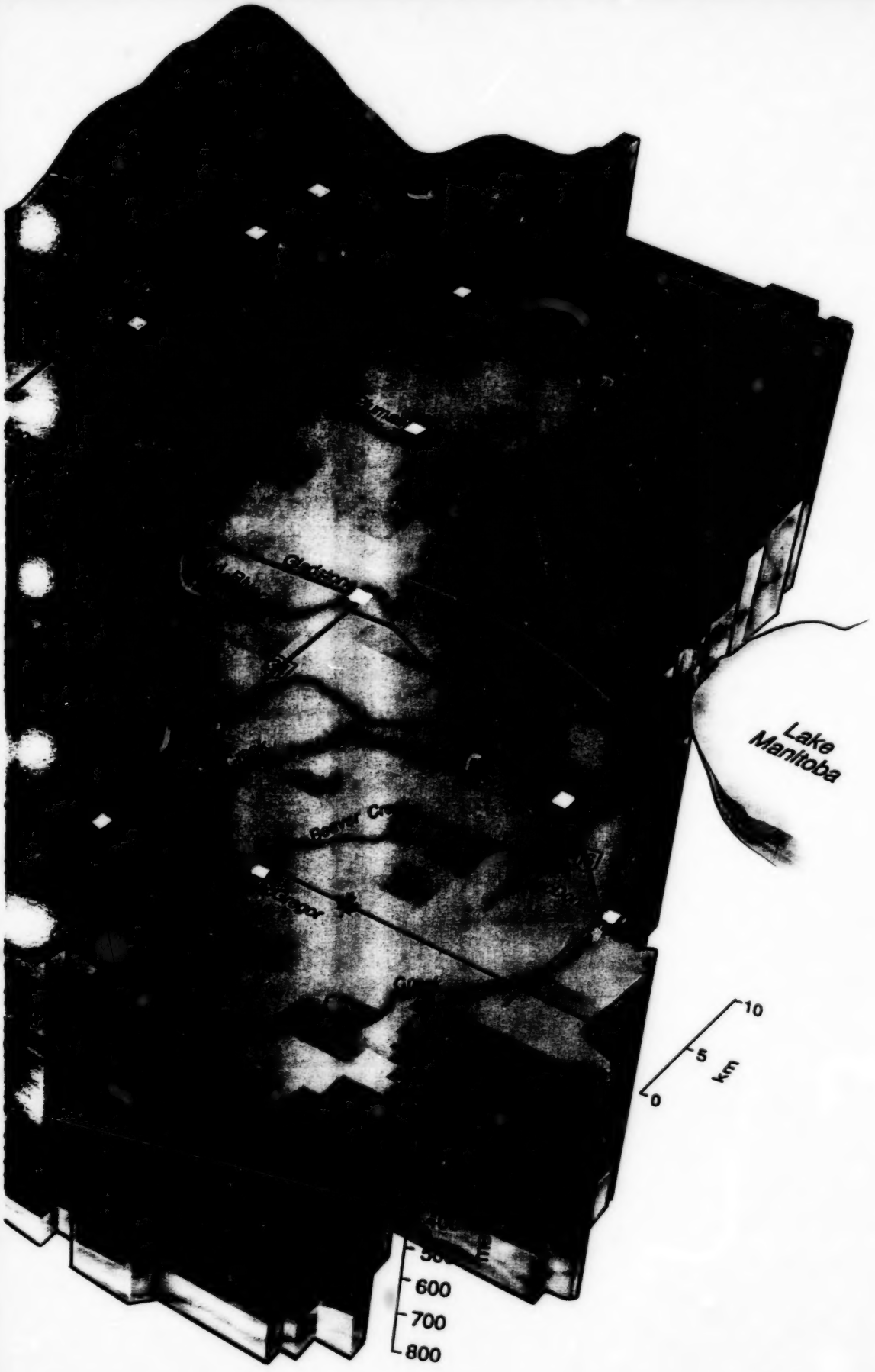
Natural Watercourses

Man-Made or Man-Improved Channels

** This map is not intended to indicate jurisdiction over waterway crossings.*

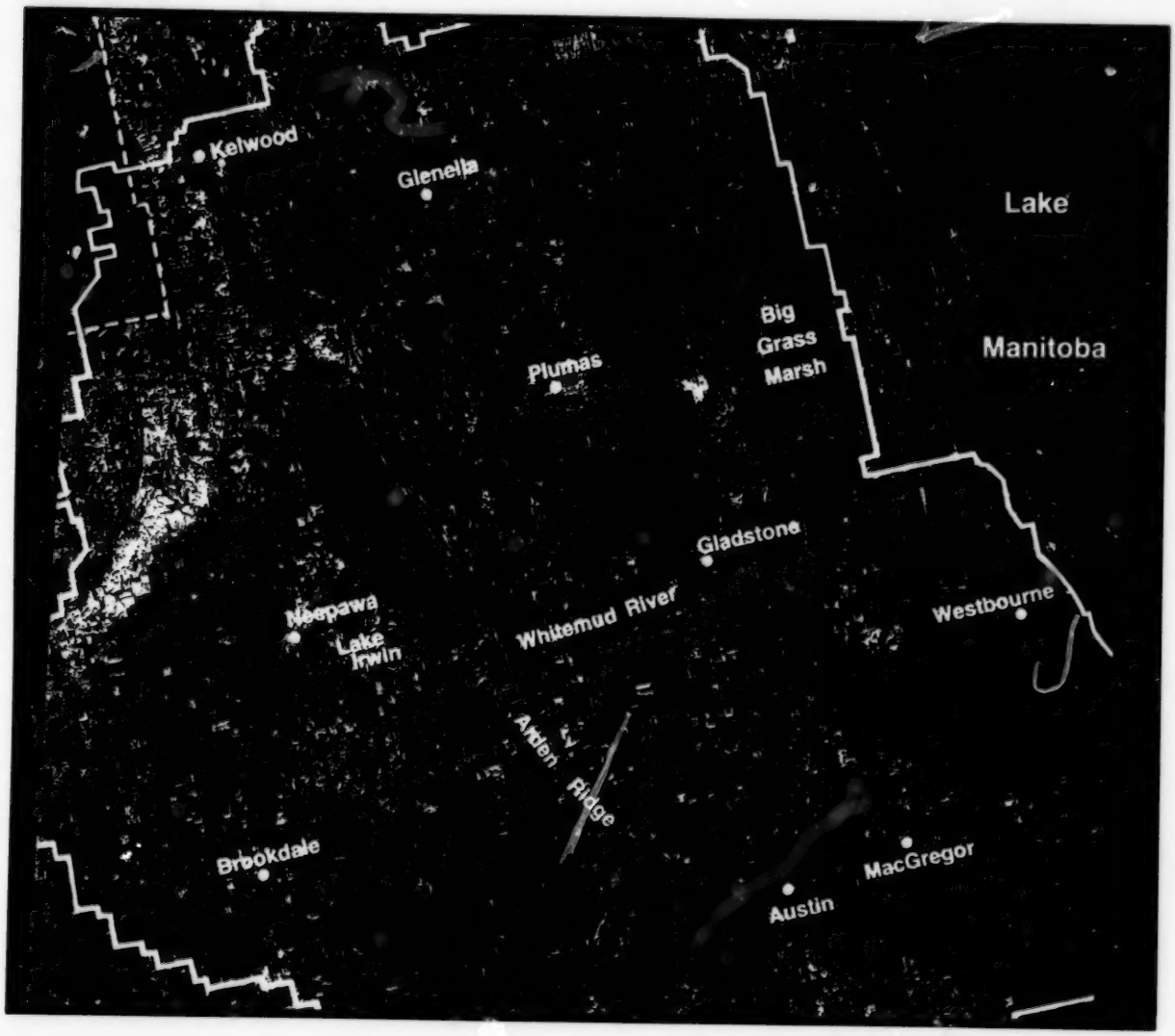
Topographic & Subsurface Features of the WHITEMUD WATERSHED CONSERVATION DISTRICT




Lake
Manitoba
10
5
km
0
600
700
800

SATELLITE IMAGE OF WHITEMUD WATERSHED CONSERVATION DISTRICT

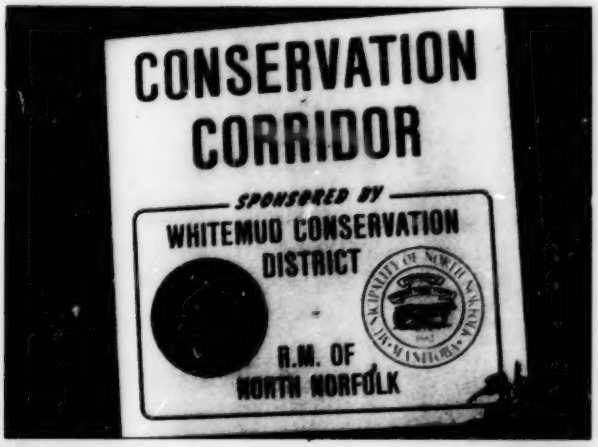
Image Date: May 9, 1988



LEGEND

Watershed Boundary

Riding Mountain National Park Boundary


CONSERVATION
CORRIDOR
SPONSORED BY
WHITEMUD CONSERVATION
DISTRICT
R.M. OF
NORTH NORFOLK

4. Fisheries

The reinstatement of fish stocks in traditional habitats and improvement of fish habitat generally is an objective widely supported by area resident and Board members.

In connection with the Province's Strategy for the Management of Manitoba's Fish Habitat, the Board will seek to implement a number of conservation measures in this field:

- **Dam Modifications:**

The Board will work with the municipalities and the Province to modify existing water control structures on the Whitemud River, Perch Creek, and Big Grass Marsh, so that fish passage and spawning are no longer restricted.

- **Protecting and Enhancing Fish Habitat:**

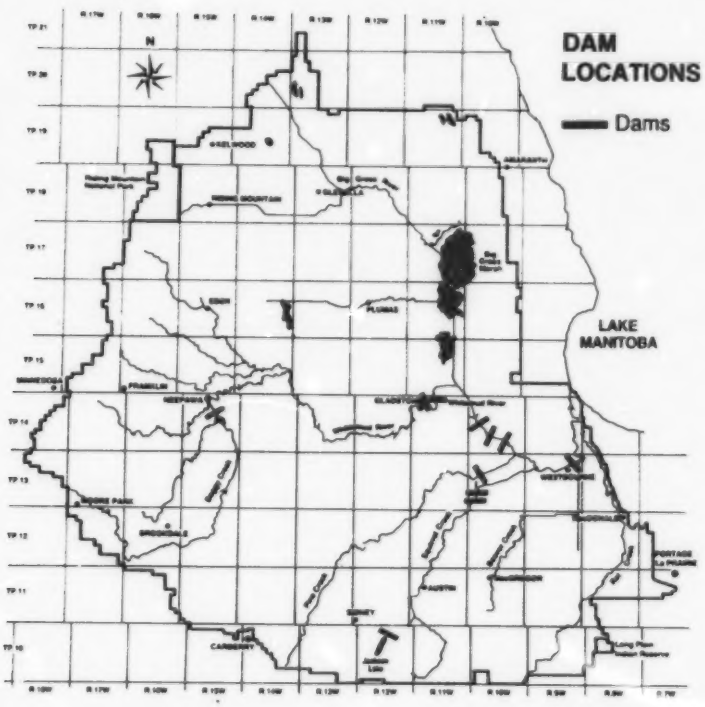
Consistent with its emphasis on multi-purpose water management projects, the Board will ensure that flows within key drainage channels are sufficient to ensure spring passage of fish upstream to their natural spawning grounds and downstream again to Lake Manitoba.

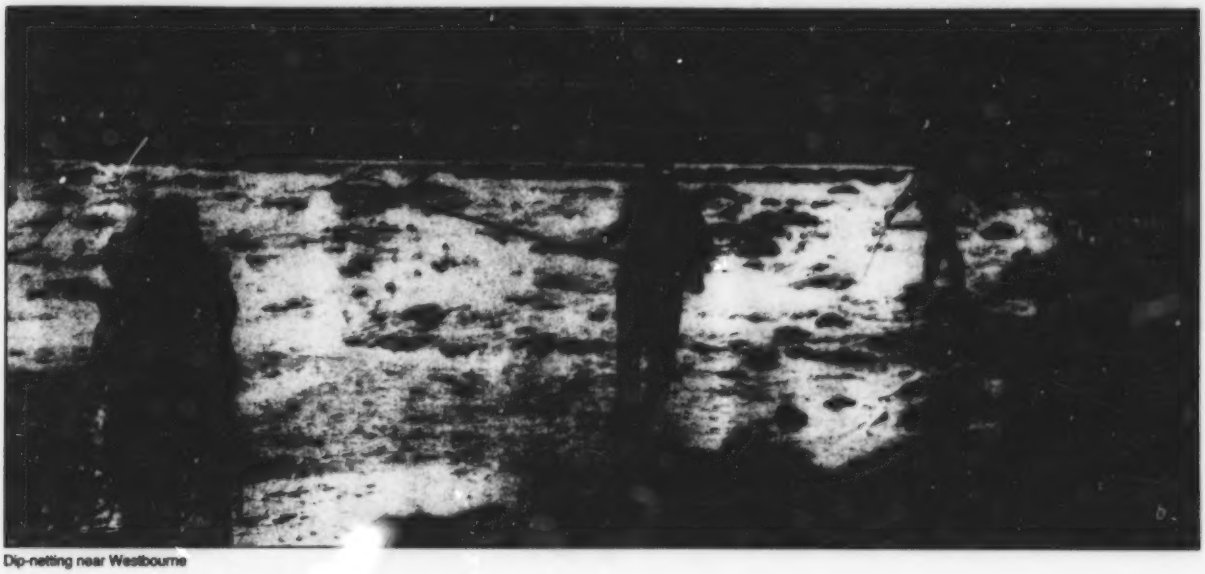
The Board will ensure that none of its water management projects endanger fish habitat, adversely affect spawning, or restrict fish movement.

The Board will also identify opportunities for fisheries habitat enhancement and request that the Manitoba Government's Fisheries Branch take all necessary action.

- **Fish Rearing and Stocking Programs:**

The Board will request Manitoba Water Resources Branch, Ducks Unlimited and the Manitoba Fisheries Branch to regulate water levels and develop fish rearing and stocking programs at suitable sites.

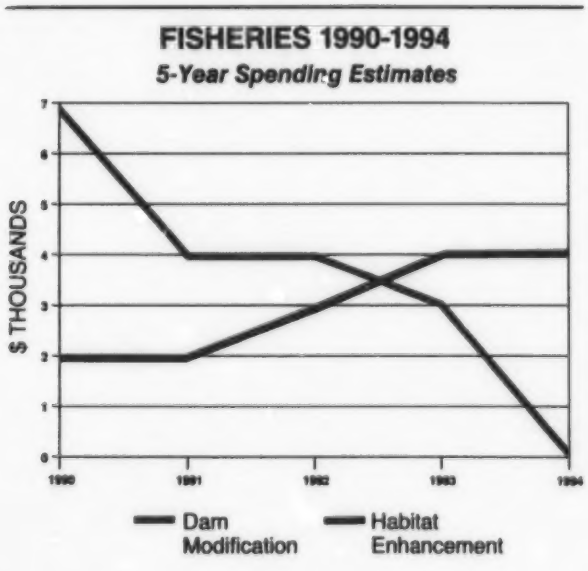




Dip-netting near Westbourne

5-YEAR SPENDING ESTIMATES: FISHERIES 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

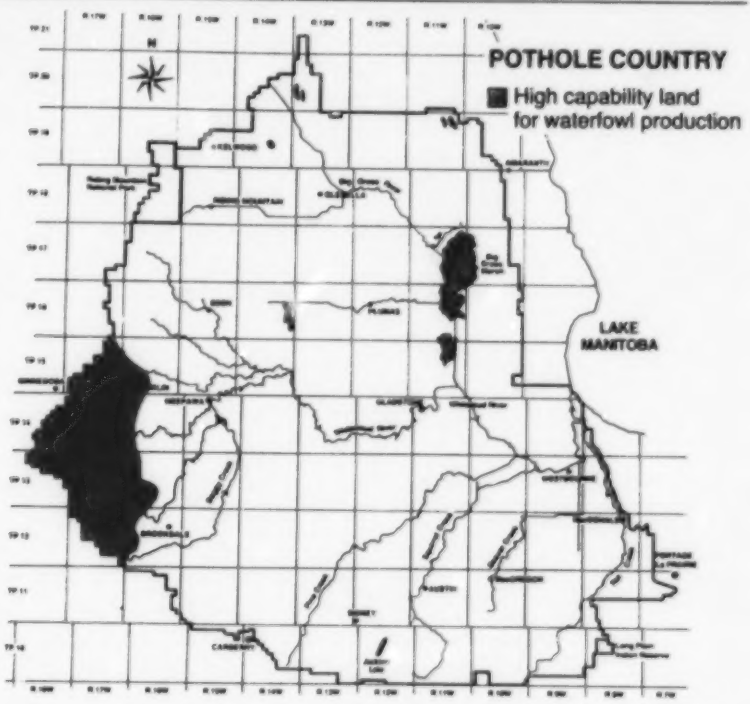
Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Dam Modifications	7	4	4	3	—	18
Habitat Enhancement	2	2	3	4	4	15
Totals	**9**	**6**	**7**	**7**	**4**	**33**
% of Total Budget for Year	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.5



5. Wildlife

Despite extensive land clearing and wetland drainage, the District still possesses areas of prime wildlife habitat. A substantial amount of land area suitable for hunting still exists in the Watershed.

It is clearly in the interests of hunters, as well as area conservation ists, to preserve and enhance the habitat that remains. Public opinion is supportive of practical and fair measures to achieve this objective.



- **Securing and Preserving Special Wildlands:**

The Board will seek to negotiate special-purpose agreements with landowners for their donation, lease and/or sale to the District of prime wildlife habitat in high priority areas, with the guarantee through legal caveat that these lands would be retained for this use "in perpetuity" and that no hunting would be permitted.

The Board will also seek, with the financial assistance of the World Wildlife Fund's Prairie Conservation Action Plan, to acquire and preserve habitat critical to the survival of rare and endangered species.

- **Retaining Potholes and Enhancing Other Waterfowl Habitat:**

The Board will take several initiatives in this area:

1. The Board will seek Provincial and Federal government approval and funding to implement a program designed to secure wetland complexes through incentive payments to landowners.
2. The Board will lobby the Province to legislate and enforce special protection to wetlands in the District, especially in the Minnedosa pothole country.
3. The Board will request the municipalities in the pothole area to pass zoning and other protective land use bylaws to prohibit drainage of wetlands.
4. The Board will not hook up to the District drainage system any private ditches intended to drain wetlands.
5. The Board will ensure that District projects and programs do not result in a net loss of wildlife habitat.
6. The Board will seek to acquire up to four scattered wetland habitat sites in the pothole region.
7. The Board will continue its close collaboration with Ducks Unlimited in developing waterfowl habitat in multi-purpose water management projects, such as Big Grass Marsh, Pockett, Bing and Silver lakes, and other water retention projects.
8. The Board, in its development of multiple-use projects, will seek to retain water in wetlands and enhance their wildlife capability, e.g. through provision of waterfowl nesting islands and retention of upland cover.
9. The Board will request government designation of the Big Grass Marsh as a Heritage Marsh under the North American Waterfowl Management Program.

- **Reclaiming and Replanting Unused Road Allowances:**

The Board will work with interested District municipalities in reinstating cover and in deterring destruction of bush within unused road allowances. The Board will encourage the munici-

palities to strictly enforce regulations to this effect.

To address current problems of hunting and agricultural encroachment, strong municipal administration and strict enforcement is required. If provided, the Board will continue and increase its facilitation, education and signage services under the Conservation Corridor program. Emphasis will be placed on using road allowances and other corridors for such multiple uses as berrypicking, birdwatching, and as windbreaks.

- **Encouragement of Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Projects:**

The Board will actively seek external sponsorship and funding for significant habitat enhancement projects.

In exceptional circumstances, the Board will seek to acquire selected parcels of significant wildlife habitat, particularly those serving as links in an overall wildlife habitat system.

- **Joint District/Municipal "Protected Area" Policy:**

The Board will seek agreement from municipal councils to pass effective conservation policies and to enforce by-laws designed to protect endangered wildlife habitat from undesirable or incompatible land uses.

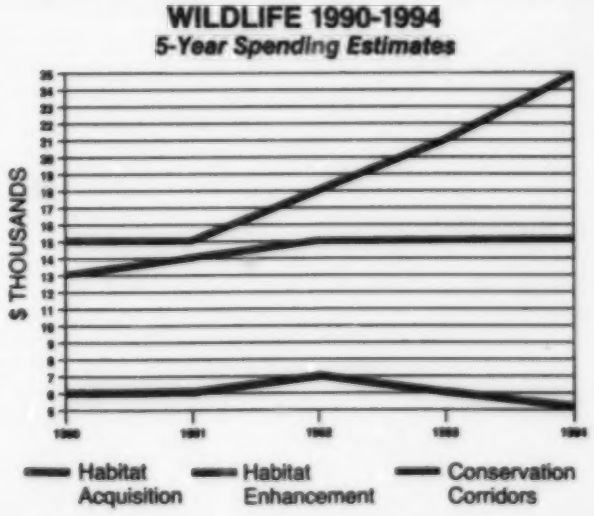
- **Taxation Benefits and Incentives for Farmers who Preserve Wildlife Habitat:**

Among the actions the Board will take in this area are:

1. The Board will request provincial and municipal governments to consider the provision of property tax credits and maintenance cost deductions as eligible expenses to landowners for preserving and maintaining on-farm wildlife and waterfowl habitat.
2. The Board will ask the Province to exempt leaseholders from taxes on wildlife habitat portions of leased crown lands, as is done in the R.M. of Rosedale. The Board also urges the Province to consider rebating to the municipalities their "lost" revenues from removing or reducing taxes on wildlife habitat lands.
3. The Board will press the Provincial Government to provide fair crop depredation compensation based on adequate valuation of actual loss.

5-YEAR SPENDING ESTIMATES: WILDLIFE 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Habitat Acquisition	15	15	18	21	25	94
Habitat Enhancement	6	6	7	6	5	30
Conservation Corridors/Wildlands	13	14	15	15	15	72
Totals	**34**	**35**	**40**	**42**	**45**	**196**
% of Total Budget for Year	2.8	2.7	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9



Canvasback brood

Credit: J.P. Morgan

6. Heritage Resources

Residents of the District are proud of their heritage, appreciative of its natural beauty, and desirous of preserving and exhibiting the area's natural and cultural resources.

However, considering the other major demands on District funds, the Board will spend only limited amounts of seed money to stimulate and assist the initiatives of others.

- **Protecting Important Natural and Cultural Landscapes:**

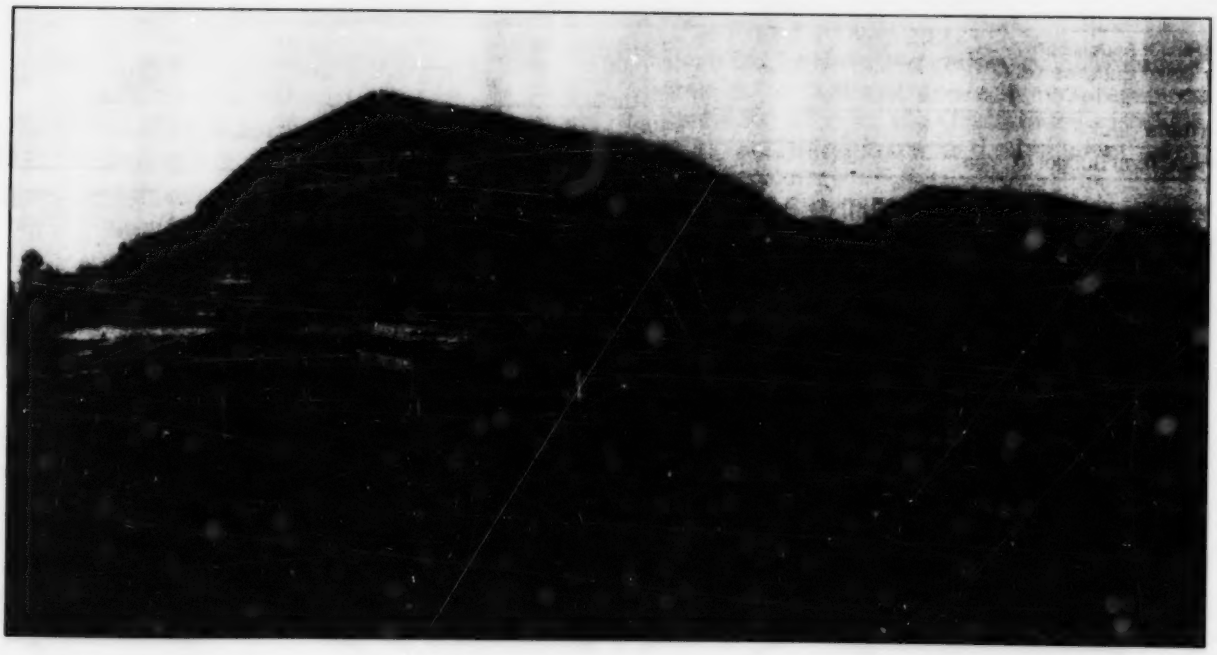
The Board will support heritage organizations in their attempts to secure Government program and special project funding to preserve and protect District landscapes and wildlands of cultural and aesthetic significance to the region and the Province.

- **Encouraging Local Awareness and Initiative:**

The Board will make residents aware of the important heritage resources on their land and will encourage and support municipalities, local historical societies, museums, and other concerned individuals and organizations to undertake projects to preserve significant aspects of the District's heritage.

5-YEAR SPENDING ESTIMATES: HERITAGE RESOURCES 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Landscape Protection	1	1	4	2	2	10
Local Awareness/Assistance	2	2	3	2	2	11
Totals	**3**	**3**	**7**	**4**	**4**	**21**
% of Total Budget for Year	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.3



7. Recreation and Tourism

The Board is convinced that tourism and recreational opportunities are inextricably rooted in conservation of our natural and heritage resources. By conserving those resources, and by cooperating with local recreational and tourism organizations, the Watershed will be serving both objectives.

At the same time, however, the Board believes that other agencies are better able to promote and increase these opportunities. This position appears to be supported by most District residents.

- **Conservation Recreation:**
The Board will not undertake recreation or tourism projects per se, but will insert recreational components as appropriate in its water, fish and wildlife projects.

- **Hunter Information and Control System:**
The Board will collaborate with the municipalities in initiating an information system, together with their purchase of ownership maps, informing hunters of opportunities and restrictions regarding hunting on private and public property within the District.

- **Signing and Advertising Outstanding Destinations:**
The Board will cooperate with District and regional recreation and tourism organizations in signing and promoting such high quality sites as Rosedale Farm and other conservation projects.

5-YEAR SPENDING ESTIMATES: RECREATION & TOURISM 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Hunting Control/Information	1	1	1	1	—	4
Signing/Advertising	2	2	6	3	—	13
Totals	**3**	**3**	**7**	**4**	**—**	**17**
% of Total Budget for Year	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.2	—	0.3

Rosedale Farm

8. Conservation Education

The Board is committed to a major thrust in increasing conservation understanding and commitment among Watershed residents and city-dwellers.

The Board is convinced that widespread and strong public support exists for the following programs:

- **High Priority Given to Conservation Education:**

The Board is committed to its education program as a principle means of preventing further environmental deterioration, of telling our conservation success stories, of promoting District programs and encouraging land users to make use of them, and of informing and preparing the next generation for the challenges to come.

- **Expanded and Targeted Student Program:**

The Board will continue and expand its program of school presentations and tours, emphasizing in-the-field laboratories and outdoor activities. Highest priority will be given to educating students at the junior and high school levels on conservation practices.

- **Joint Conservation District Educational and Lobbying Campaign:**

The Board will discuss opportunities for joint sponsorship and cost-sharing with other Conservation Districts around the Province of an educational, advertising and lobbying program.

Objectives of this campaign, aimed primarily at urban dwellers and politicians, would be such items as improved conservation content in the Manitoba school curriculum, needed amendments to the Conservation Districts Act, the mutual conservation and environmental interests of urban and rural residents, and production and distribution of films, video cassettes, television ads, and/or publications on superior conservation practices.

- **Annual Public Report:**

The Board will publish and distribute a report to District residents each year informing them of the Board's current and planned programs and ways in which they can participate in and benefit from the programs and other District conservation activities.

- **Big Grass Marsh Interpretive Centre:**

The Board will work with local municipalities, Ducks Unlimited, and other agencies to establish a wetland interpretation program and trail walk system at the Big Grass Marsh Complex.

- **Rosedale Farm Interpretive Centre:**

The Board will examine the feasibility of establishing an interpretive facility to explain and demonstrate the outstanding soil management and planting practices undertaken at Rosedale Farm.

- **Expanded Sign Program:**

The Board will identify appropriate projects (both in operation and under development) and locations for self-guided tours and signage informing local residents and travellers about District conservation activities.

- **Conservation Corps of Volunteers:**

The Board will try to establish a volunteer organization to promote conservation activities, to raise funds, and to actively support District programs and objectives.

- **Conservation Tours and Events:**

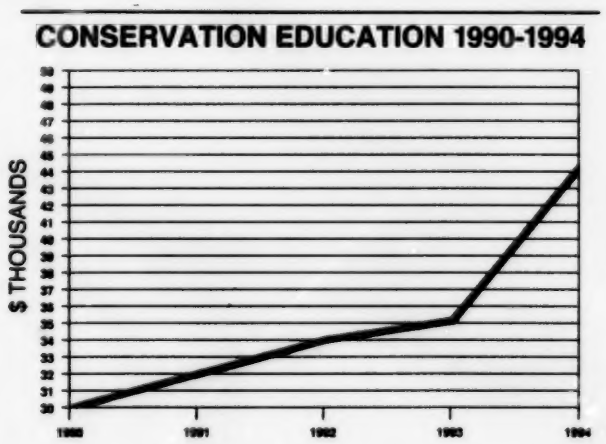
The Board will organize a regular schedule of tours and events to show residents the conservation accomplishments of their neighbours and of the Watershed, such as Rosedale Farm, Big Grass Marsh, Conservation Family Farms, and outstanding snow and water management practices. The Board will also organize tours of outside projects and programs of potential applicability and significance to the Watershed.

Scout tree planting

Conservation field trip

5-YEAR SPENDING ESTIMATES: CONSERVATION EDUCATION 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Student/School Programs	18	19	19	20	21	97
Lobbying	2	2	2	2	3	11
Annual Public Report	3	3	3	3	4	16
Interpretive Centres	2	2	3	3	6	16
Signage	1	2	2	2	3	10
Volunteer Corps	1	1	1	1	2	6
Tours/Special Events	3	3	4	4	5	19
Totals	**30**	**32**	**34**	**35**	**44**	**175**
% of Total Budget for Year	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.0	2.6



9. Administration

The District is administered by our core staff:

Manager:	Wayne Hildebrand
Sec.-Treas.:	Gail White
Sec. Asst.:	Suzanne Nicholson
Soils Tech.:	Glen Nichol

The functions and services provided by our administration include:

- preparing annual budgets and controlling costs,
- preparing funding proposals to external sources and negotiating agreements,
- administering, monitoring and evaluating District programs,
- conducting field investigations and inspections of District projects,
- encouraging and coordinating activities of conservation and development organizations active in the Watershed,
- administering tenders and negotiating contracts,
- communicating with District residents, interest groups, and other participants,
- resolving land use conflicts and problems.

Skilled and experienced management and staff are required to develop and implement the many Board programs and initiatives. The Board must also provide them with all needed office resources and field support. While adequate District staff and resources are essential to implement Watershed programs, the Board recognizes that the considerable time and expenses contributed by provincial department officials have been, and will continue to be, indispensable in program delivery.

- **District Manager and Secretary-Treasurer:**

The Board over the next five years will spend between $60,000 and $72,000 per year on salaries and benefits for these two staff members.

- **Additional Staff:**

As the District's programs and services expand, the Board will examine ways and means of securing additional needed staff.

- **Annual Office Operating Expenses:**

The Board will spend approximately $50,000 to $59,000 per year on expenses, which include:

- office rental,
- office equipment,
- utilities,
- supplies,
- board remuneration,
- staff travel and other expenses,
- vehicles,
- public relations, and
- other miscellaneous expenses.

Annual increases are provided to keep pace with rising costs, but do not include any new or additional expense items.

Cooperative Project Management

5-YEAR SPENDING ESTIMATES: ADMINISTRATION 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
Management/Staff	60	63	66	69	72	330
Additional Staff	—	—	—	8	10	18
Office Expenses	50	52	55	57	59	273
Totals	**110**	**115**	**121**	**134**	**141**	**621**
% of Total Budget for Year	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.5	9.5	9.2

Revenues: 1990-94

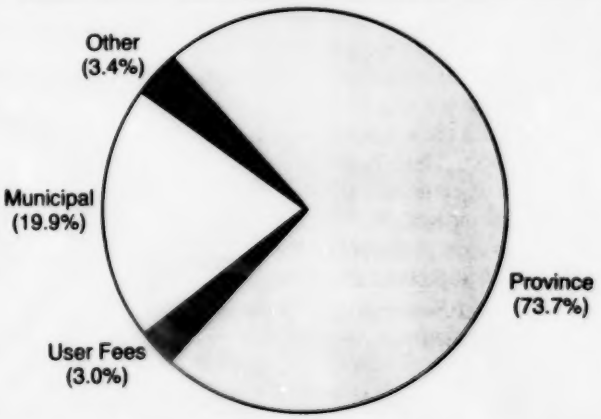
• **Assumptions:**
District expenditure projections during the next five years are based on the following revenue assumptions:

- ◊ that total revenues will increase at 5% per year, i.e. the historic rate of inflation (4%) plus a small real dollar increase (1%);
- ◊ that revenues from the municipalities will rise very slightly above their current subdistrict tax levels, now varying from $1.30 to $8.50 per $1000 of land assessment;
- ◊ that the municipalities will provide special annual grants to the Watershed to supplement their conservation tax levies;
- ◊ that revenue from the Province will be maintained at the typical level of $3 for every $1 raised through local levies (the 75/25 cost-sharing formula);
- ◊ that new revenues will be raised from external sources to expand program activities and provide for real growth.

• **Sources:**
The Board has only four sources of money to support its programs and projects. Taking the District's 1988 budget of $1.1 million as an example, funds came from the Provincial Government (74%), the municipalities (20%), and program charges and other sources (6% combined).

To maintain the current real dollar level of program expenditures, to increase and improve programs in the years to come, and to implement this Management Plan, the Board must raise more money. To do so, especially from non-tax sources, the Board needs the cooperation and support of local residents.

1988 REVENUES
Whitemud Watershed



• **Raising the Money:**
The Board intends to take the following initiatives in raising the needed funds from its four basic sources:

1. **PROVINCE OF MANITOBA**

◇ **Increase in Provincial Funding:** The Board will request the Province to increase its annual support of the Whitemud Watershed through continuation of the basic 75/25 provincial/municipal cost-sharing arrangement. It will also request development of a supplementary incentive system whereby the Province would partially match funds raised by the District from external sources.

2. **LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES**

◇ **Gradual Increase in Municipal Mill Rates for Conservation Purposes:** The Board will request the municipalities to increase gradually the relatively modest mill rate levies for Watershed conservation program purposes (ranging in 1989 from 1.3 to 8.5 mills). The Board will further request all municipalities to show on their annual tax statements the municipal conservation mill rate and the level of the Provincial contribution for Watershed purposes.

◇ **Allocation of Some Subdistrict Funds for General Purposes:** The Board will attempt to negotiate an equitable formula with the municipalities and subdistricts by which a portion of locally-raised revenues will be allocated to an unrestricted General Conservation Fund. This would be used to finance programs and/or projects in any area(s) within the District, as may be determined by the Board, and to trigger funding from outside organizations.

◇ **Special Project Municipal Grants:** The Board will request the municipalities to make annual grants on an as-needed basis to support important District projects of special significance for the Watershed.

3. **PROGRAM AND USER CHARGES**

◇ **Increased Cost-Sharing by Program Beneficiaries:** The Board will gradually increase user charges for existing programs, such as forage seed assistance, as a means of improving and expanding other services and programs to District residents.

◇ **Activity and Event Fees:** The Board will institute modest fees for some of its conservation activities and events, such as scheduled bus tours, film programs, advice on farm management practices, etc., as a means of covering administrative and overhead costs

4. OTHER LOCAL AND EXTERNAL SOURCES

◊ **Local Fundraising:** The Board may institute an extensive fund-raising campaign throughout the District to raise needed additional revenue.

◊ **External Fundraising:** The Board will undertake a major fund-raising program directed at securing more external funds for high-priority projects. Private and public organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation, Wildlife Habitat Canada, the World Wildlife Fund, Manitoba Wildlife Federation, the National Soil Conservation Program, corporations, foundations, and environmental organizations will be approached for support.

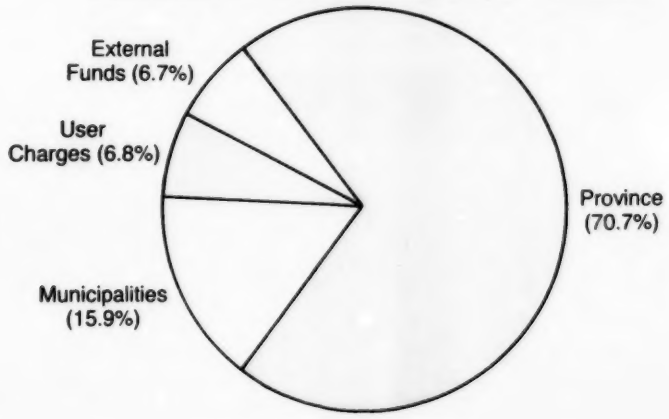
In concert with other Conservation Districts and area municipalities, the Board will request the Government and the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation to continue their funding of conservation and to provide the Conservation Districts with ongoing access to Provincial gaming funds.

◊ **"Whitemud Conservation Trust":** The Board intends to establish a registered, non-profit charitable institution to build and administer a financial endowment for future conservation activities in the District. This mechanism would allow individuals, families, and estates to make tax-deductible contributions and/or bequests of money, property, goods or services.

5-YEAR REVENUE ESTIMATES BY SOURCE: ALL PROGRAMS 1990-94 ($ x 1000 AND % OF TOTAL)

Funding Source	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total	%
1. Province (Annual Grant)	862	905	950	998	1048	4763	70.7
2. Municipalities (Levies/Grants)	194	203	214	224	235	1070	15.9
3. User Charges	67	84	96	101	107	455	6.8
Total Core Budget	**1123**	**1192**	**1260**	**1323**	**1390**	**6288**	
4. External Funds (annual targets)	96	88	84	88	92	448	6.7
(% increase to core)	(+8.5%)	(+7.4%)	(+6.7%)	(+6.7%)	(+6.6%)	(+7.1%)	
Total Projected Budget	**1219**	**1280**	**1344**	**1411**	**1482**	**6736**	**100.0**

TOTAL REVENUE ESTIMATES
1990-1994



Potential Target Sources for External Project Funding

- Ducks Unlimited (Big Grass Marsh Project and interpretive centre)
- Wildlife Habitat Canada (wildlife habitat acquisition)
- Soils Agreement – (soil management programs)
- PFRA (soil management programs)
- Manitoba Agriculture (soil management demonstrations)
- Manitoba Parks (recreation signage)
- Manitoba Culture, Heritage & Recreation (interpretive centres, heritage signage, conservation education)
- Manitoba Business Development and Tourism (tourism signage)
- Manitoba Education (school and student programs, curriculum changes, conservation education)
- Manitoba Natural Resources (water, fisheries, wildlife and other projects)
- Manitoba Rural Development (crossing replacements, etc.)

Expenditures: 1990-94

The Board proposes to spend over $6.7 million on conservation programs over the next five years, rising from $1.219 million in 1990 to $1.482 million in 1994. The budget is based on our current expenditure base and projected forward at an estimated 5% annual growth rate. This takes account of anticipated inflationary and operating cost increases, plus initiation of new programs and projects.

- **Types:**

Expenditures take the following basic forms:

◇ **Program and Project Costs:** The Board now spends, and will continue to spend, the vast majority of its funds on maintenance and construction of the District's extensive infrastructure of waterways and crossings.

◇ **Land Acquisition:** The Board will spend an increasing amount of money on acquiring selected key sites for water storage, wetland preservation, wildlife protection, and other conservation purposes.

◇ **Incentive Payments and Preferred Program Access:** The Board intends to implement a range of selected financial incentives for "conservation landowners" in exchange for their contributions in money, land, demonstration projects, and/or services. The Board will also give preference in accessing Board programs to those who have successfully demonstrated their commitment to conservation.

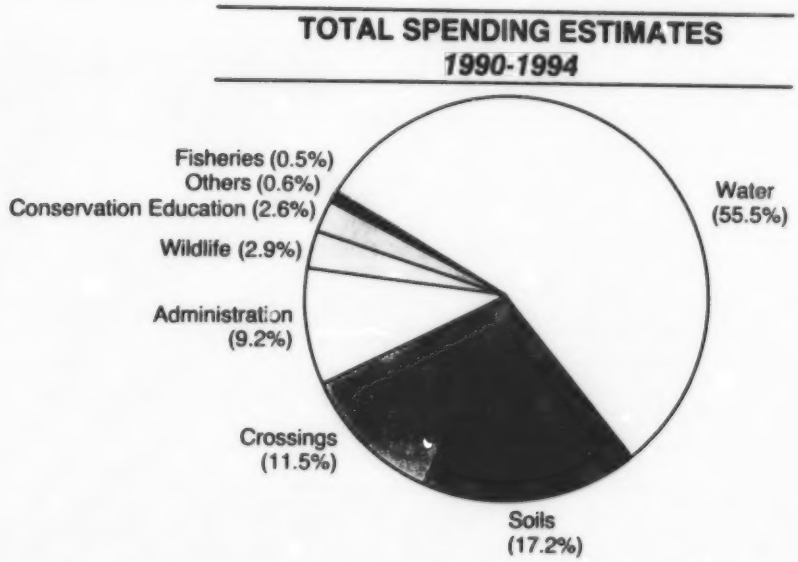
◇ **Conservation Education:** The Board will commit a high level of spending to continually improve its abilities and performance in "spreading the word" and educating current and future generations residing in the District and elsewhere in the Province, especially in the cities.

5-YEAR BUDGET ALLOCATIONS: ALL PROGRAMS 1990-94 (% OF TOTAL)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
1 Water Management	58.0	59.0	56.3	54.1	51.3	55.5
2 Crossings	9.5	8.0	10.0	13.0	16.0	11.5
3 Soil Management	17.0	18.0	17.6	16.9	16.6	17.2
4 Fisheries	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.5
5 Wildlife	2.8	2.7	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
6 Heritage Resources	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3
7 Recreation/Tourism	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.3	—	0.3
8 Conservation Education	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.0	2.6
9 Administration	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.5	9.5	9.2
Total % (rounded)	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

5-YEAR SPENDING ALLOCATIONS: ALL PROGRAMS 1990-94 ($ x 1000)

Program	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Total
1 Water Management	705	755	757	763	761	3741
2 Crossings	116	102	134	183	237	772
3 Soil Management	209	229	237	239	246	1160
4 Fisheries	9	6	7	7	4	33
5 Wildlife	34	35	40	42	45	196
6 Heritage Resources	3	3	7	4	4	21
7 Recreation/Tourism	3	3	7	4	—	17
8 Conservation Education	30	32	34	35	44	175
9 Administration	110	115	121	134	141	621
Total (all Programs)	**1219**	**1280**	**1344**	**1411**	**1482**	**6736**



• **Community Meetings:**
An Issues and Options booklet was distributed to all Whitemud District residents in January 1989. In February, a total of 150 people attended public meetings in five District communities. An additional four meetings were held with 36 elected municipal officials and subdistrict members.

The Board's Draft Management Plan, including a survey questionnaire on the Plan's key policies, was distributed to all District households in June 1989. In July, 70 residents attended three community meetings held in MacGregor, Gladstone and Neepawa.

While attendance at the public meetings was fair, response to the questionnaire was disappointing. From the opinions expressed and the survey responses received, however, we are convinced that strong but tacit support exists throughout the District for the Board's Plan.

Among the most useful responses received, and the Board's subsequent decisions in respect to them, were:

◊ THE WATERSHED'S ROLE IN CONSERVATION ENFORCEMENT: References in the Draft Plan regarding the Board's willingness to enter into fee-for-service contracts with the municipalities for District enforcement of conservation by-laws have been removed in the Final Plan.

Public views were mixed on this issue. Many seemed to have no objection to the Board taking a stronger enforcement role. They agreed that farmers should be fined or taxed if they cultivate to the bottom of ditches, encroach on and cultivate unused road allowances, or violate the Water Rights Act. While education and incentives are preferred, residents recognized that enforceable laws are often needed to make them effective. The RM of Minto's by-law prohibiting the clearing of trees and cultivating within road allowances was cited as a potentially effective regulatory approach.

Others, however, questioned whether abuses were so widespread as to require more regulation at this time. Before enforcement is emphasized, they suggested that education and incentives, if needed, should be tried first. In their view, regulation and enforcement takes control out of the hands of local landowners and typically gives rise to abuse of power.

Legal difficulties also exist in enforcing the municipalities' authority to bill landowners for removing blowdirt from drains. Fundamentally, the Board believes that regulation and enforcement of conservation by-laws are the responsibility of the municipalities and planning districts. The Whitemud Conservation District, therefore, while assisting the municipalities in the drafting of suitable conservation by-laws, will not be involved in enforcement at this time.

◊ DRAIN CONSTRUCTION: While most agreed that the Board should "hold tight" on construction of new drains, others contended there may still be a need for some new drains and for drain improvements on a system basis. The Board has determined to keep the new construction option open, although still according it a low priority.

◊ HUNTING FEES: The initial suggestion of investigating the institution of fees for hunting on private land was removed by the Board. A number of persons opposed this concept, either because hunting is considered a right or because they do not believe that private owners should make money from a public resource or the District's investments in wildlife protection.

• **Questionnaire Results:**
Over 6700 questionnaires were distributed with the Draft Plan requesting District residents to register their opinions on the Board's proposed policies. Relatively few completed questionnaires were received, however.

Survey respondents disagreed with only four of the Board's proposed draft policies. These involved the Board's intentions not to control spring flooding, not to replace farmers' convenience crossings, to investigate the possibility of establishing a fee structure for hunting, and to request a gradual increase in municipal mill rate levies for conservation programs. As a result, the Board either revised or deleted the relevant policy statements.

Significantly, several controversial policies were given substantial support. These included the Board's policies on stronger regulation and enforcement of conservation by-laws, proceeding with the Big Grass Marsh project, reducing crossings, increasing farmer cost for forage seed

assistance, gradually increasing user charges for District programs, and requesting special annual municipal grants.

Given the overwhelmingly positive responses received, the Board is confident that Watershed residents generally approve of the direction and plans for the future as contained in the Management Plan.

- **Departmental Response:**

Requests for comment and suggestion on the Draft Plan were sent to all government departments with responsibilities and interests in conservation. Five responses were received. Congratulations were extended to the Board for preparing "a comprehensive plan that encompasses all major aspects of environmental protection".

In response to specific departmental suggestions, revisions were made with regard to wildlife refuges and wind and water erosion risk.

- **Summary:**

The Conservation District Board has benefitted greatly from the input of residents, political leaders, and provincial officials during the management planning process. As a result of the extensive consultation process that has been implemented, the Board amended some parts of its Draft Plan and strengthened its resolve to pursue important and practical changes in its policies and programs.

The Board takes special pride in the educational value of the documents distributed during the planning process. As a result, and in response to specific resident requests, the Board will keep the public informed by publishing an annual report on its programs and progress.

Gratified with the public and official response it has received, the Board is confident that implementation of its Management Plan will receive the public's continued support in the years ahead.

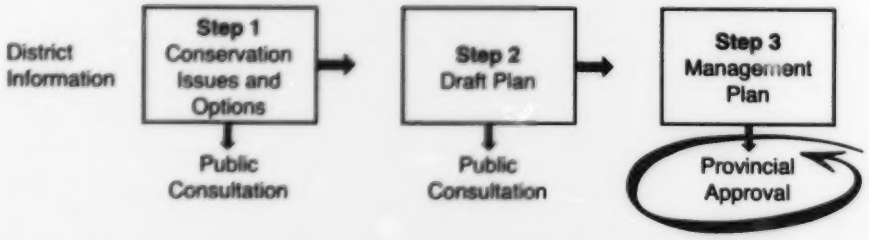
The Watershed in the Year 2010

Our Vision of the Future: What will the District be like in twenty years? How will the Board's long-term strategy affect the lives of those who live and work in the Watershed?

Driving down the Yellowhead Highway and back roads of the District in Year 2010, we expect to see:

- water in dugouts and ditches, even in the driest years,
- drains efficiently carrying excess runoff and unencumbered with blowdirt.
- air undarkened by the blowing soil of the past, in summer and winter,
- crops that don't burn up in dry years,
- grasses and forages growing on marginal agricultural land,
- water that is clean, safe, and abundant for human and animal use,
- a continuous web of shelterbelts and block plantings dotting the landscape,
- fish once more swimming in their traditional stream habitats,
- more and more wetlands filled with waterfowl,
- deer, elk and other wildlife thriving in their reinstated habitats,
- people from all over the District and beyond enjoying and sustaining the area's environment,
- our local people – farmers, ranchers and townspeople – proud of their heritage, their quality of life, and of what they have done to conserve it.

The 3 Step Planning Process



This Management Plan is the product of a three-step process.

We will be taking three steps:

Step 1: Conservation Issues and Options (January 1989). This document, distributed to all residents of the District, set out a range of resource management issues and options for consideration. Residents, subdistrict members, and municipal councillors attended five Community Meetings held in MacGregor, Gladstone, Westbourne, Glenella and Neepawa to discuss the Watershed's conservation issues and options. Four Council-Subdistrict Workshops were also held during February of 1989.

Step 2: Draft Management Plan. The Draft Plan is the second step in the process. The Board has conducted three Public Meetings, held in MacGregor, Gladstone and Neepawa in July of 1989, on the contents of The Draft Plan.

Step 3: Management Plan. After considering the public's response and suggestions, the Board prepared this Final Management Plan. It will be sent to the Minister of Rural Development for Provincial approval.